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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9551  
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2596  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1213  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 1795  
RUEHUM/AMEMBASSY ULAANBAATAR 0462  
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 0367  
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 2005  
RUEHGZ/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU 3518  
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 0037  
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 0299  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1658

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BANGKOK 003648

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/20/2006

TAGS: PREF PGOV PREL PHUM KNEP KS TH

SUBJECT: ONE NORTH KOREAN AND ONE PRC NATIONAL APPROACH  
EMBASSY

REF: STATE 58514

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Classified By: Political Counselor Susan M. Sutton

1.(U) This is an action request. See para 8.

¶2. (C) On Monday, June 19 at approximately 1000 Bangkok time, one male aged 54 and one female aged 58 approached the front gate of the U.S. Embassy and identified themselves as North Koreans. They were met and interviewed by Poloff, ARSO, DHS/ICE and Embassy spouse interpreter at 1100. They were unaccompanied and spoke no English and no Thai. Embassy had no advance notice the two were coming.

¶3. (C) It was learned during the interview that the female is, in fact, a national of the People's Republic of China. The couple is not married but had been living together for the past 8 years in Jilin, China. The female accompanied the male on the journey from China in order to assist him in seeking asylum in the United States. In response to a question, the male stated that he approached the Embassy to seek resettlement in the United States. The female stated that she did not intend to request resettlement in the United States.

¶4. (C) Poloff explained USG policy towards North Korean refugees to the two individuals. Per reftel instructions, Poloff referred the male to UNHCR. Poloff contacted and told UNHCR about the cases. UNHCR agreed to interview the male on 20 June at 0930 Bangkok time. Embassy Thai staff will escort the him by taxi to UNHCR. As the North Korean male stated that he had no funds to pay for accommodations, Poloff contacted IOM to arrange temporary shelter for the male. The female PRC national departed the Embassy on her own accord.

¶5. (C) Biographical information on the two individuals follows.

Name: Lee Chol Joon

Sex: Male

DOB: April 21, 1952

Subject abandoned his wife, two daughters and one son in Kangwan do, North Korea in 1997 in order to emigrate to

China. On May 22, 2006 he obtained a fraudulent Chinese passport under the name of Yonghuan Piao for the purpose of traveling to Thailand to seek asylum at the US Embassy. He paid the equivalent of approximately 1,200 USD to purchase the identification card of the true Mr. Piao.

Name: Yingshu Zhao

Sex: Female

DOB: November 19, 1947

Subject is ethnic Korean born in Jilin, China. She claims to have been living with Lee Chol Joon since September 1998.

She claims that she used her home as collateral for a loan from a black market lender in order to finance the couple's travel to Thailand and Lee Chol Joon's fraudulent passport.

¶6. (C) Refugee Route of travel: The couple left Jilin on June 3. They traveled by train to Homyong (sp?) and then by bus to Jinghong. In Jinghong, they contacted a travel agent who arranged entry visas for Thailand. They remained in Jinghong for nine days. The couple then flew from Jinghong to Bangkok on Bangkok Airways (PG 629) on June 17. They reported no NGO guidance or assistance throughout their travel. After arriving in Thailand, the couple reports that they spent two days sleeping on the street before approaching the US Embassy in Monday morning (June 19). The female possess a return ticket on Bangkok Airways to Jinghong. She intends to return to China.

¶7. (C) Rumors: This couple decided to go into debt, obtain fraudulent travel documents, and travel to Thailand because they heard that if North Koreans make it to the US Embassy in Bangkok they will be able to speak to an American officer and will be resettled to the United States. They said that they had been told that this information was broadcast on Radio Free Asia. In fact, the PRC national was hopeful that the US Embassy would reimburse her for the expenses she incurred in

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helping her partner reach Bangkok.

¶8. (C) Action Request: Please provide guidance on whether post should take further steps in processing the case of Lee Chol Joon for U.S. resettlement.

ARVIZU